

R6 New Mexico – Texas – Chihuahua (3-State) Regional Workgroup (RWG)
Summary of Border 2020 Key Accomplishments and Priorities for the 2015-2016 period

Through bi-national collaboration, supported with technical and financial assistance, our B2020 Task Force partners made notable progress advancing the program goals, steered by measurable outcomes specified in each of the 72 activities included in the 2013-2014 Action Plan.

Subsequent to initiating the B2020 program two years ago, in August 2013, our 3-State RWG and nine Task Forces' Leaders held a senior executive leadership meeting in San Antonio, TX; followed by the RWG annual public meeting in August 2014 in Anthony, NM.

As of July 31st, 2014, approximately 54 % of actions listed in the Action Plan have been completed, and most of the remaining 46 % are in good stride of accomplishment or are multi-year projects, with only one being postponed,

Among the many advances by each of various Goal's respective Task Force, we can highlight:

The El Paso, TX–Ciudad Juarez, Chih, bi-national air-shed, was once considered as one of the unhealthiest metropolitan areas in the US. The city of El Paso, TX, having been once in non-compliance for CO, Ozone and PM10 emissions, has systematically achieved compliance with these NAAQS standards. Specific programs implemented by our **Air Quality partners** have kept pollutants under CAA standards by focusing on air pollution reduction strategies throughout the binational air-basin, such as:

- Establishment of a State-wide vehicle emissions inspection program in Chihuahua, Mexico. In addition, Mexico published a federal rule concerning vehicle imports and emissions testing since vehicles in the border cities of Mexico adversely impact air quality in shared air basins.
- The basin-wide "Rider8 project," team outlined and identified potential measures that may assist with keeping ozone concentrations below the new air quality standard.

Our **Water Quality partners** have made an unparalleled effort in assuring access to clean and safe water, when,

- In March 2014, the Ciudad Juarez water master plan financed by EPA through BECC was finalized establishing a solid framework thru the Year 2030 for future drinking water projects within the municipality of Ciudad Juarez.
- In May 2014, Ciudad Juarez became the first border Mexican sister-city to achieve the capacity to treat 100% of its wastewater produced in Juarez with the operation of the 5th wastewater treatment plant.

The **Materials and Waste Management partners** have taken an approach for minimizing illegal dumping, through recycling of materials by promoting value added that may change thinking of waste as a reusable resource.

- The municipality of Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, once having the largest scrap tire pile along the U.S.-Mexico border, has removed over 9 million scrap tires. Current plans are

to remediate and transform the site to be utilized for ecological, educational and cultural events.

- Through a B2020 grant, the New Mexico-Chihuahua Task Force partners identified two contaminated sites in Ascensión, Chihuahua that are now registered in SEMARNAT's SISCO program (equivalent to US EPA's Superfund list), for further study and possible remediation activities. These sites are suspected of having had operations that were illegally processing recycling of batteries with open air furnaces.

The binational communities have assurance by our safety partners that in the case of a chemical spill and the threat of risk of exposure our Task Force have **enhanced joint preparedness and response**, due to:

- Existing Sister-city plans have been updated, complemented by either training or tabletop exercises, benefitting local responders on both the U.S. and Mexican side.
- In 2013-2014, in El Paso, TX – Ciudad Juarez, Chih, conducted five binational exercises between EPA, PROFEPA, Civil Protection and other federal, state and local partners that included DHS-CBP, Border Patrol, and Mexico's Federal Customs Agency.

Binational private–public–partnership accomplishments resulted in collaboration that **enhances compliance and environmental stewardship**, while strengthening trade, due to:

- Economic incentive mechanisms for manufacturing corporations that encourage their participation in national voluntary audits. In 2014, fifty-two (52) companies in Ciudad Juarez joined PROFEPA's PNAA, a voluntary audits national. The program offers economic incentives to manufacturing corporations
- In 2013, the Ysleta-Zaragoza Port Of Entry in partnership with a private company from El Paso, established a dedicated lane for trusted commercial shipments as a demonstration project known as "Frontera-21". The port has seen an increase of daily trucks crossing per shipper enrolled and eliminated wait times at POE that reduce diesel emissions supporting compliance and good stewardship.

Summary priorities and emerging issues to be addressed in the 2015-2016 action plan:

Goal 1:

- Systematic financial support for operating and managing regional AAQMNS (Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network System) and assessment of current distribution and coverage of monitors throughout the binational air-shed in El Paso, TX – Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua
- Preparing for potential managing risk to Ambient Toxic Pollution Emissions due to inadequate disposal of millions of TV monitors due to Mexico's analog shutdown by December 31st, 2015 in Mexican sister cities

Goal 2:

- High levels of Arsenic and Fluoride in the drinking water in Palomas, Chihuahua – Columbus, New Mexico; Presidio, Texas - Ojinaga, Chihuahua geographic regions
- Continued interest and priority for Bi-national groundwater studies in the regions of Presidio, TX - Ojinaga, Chih. and Santa Teresa, NM - Geronimo, Chih.

Goal 3:

- Preparations are underway to collect and dispose of thousands of tons of E-waste, and capitalize on technology for Solid Recovered Fuel (CSR for its Spanish) Technology, that would generate funds and would expand the life of landfills cells
- In the regions of Ojinaga, Chih. and Palomas-Ascencion, the landfills have reached their capacity. Currently administrations are looking at closure of existing cells and certification and procurement of funds for a new City Landfill. The Administration of Ojinaga has already secured land. Similar situation in Palomas - Ascencion, where that administration is currently working with the BECC to secure funds.

Goal 4:

- Emergency Response with regards to natural events especially regarding Flooding
- Mass Migration Protocol (Working with CBP and Border Patrol) in Southern Dona Ana County, New Mexico-Chihuahua Region

Goal 5:

- Risks of environmental impact and damages to ecosystem, natural resources and health due to threats of crosscutting contamination to various media,
- Campaigns directed at industrial parks, and or at the level of maquiladora facilities or sector, in order to increase their level of compliance, competitiveness with applicable legislation on environmental matters